



DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

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Rapides Parish man arrested for illegal disposal of waste

BATON ROUGE – Today, investigators within the Criminal Investigation Division of the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, along with deputies of the Rapides Parish Sheriff's Office, arrested a Rapides Parish man for the alleged illegal burning and disposal of roofing shingles, tire rims, plastic products, aerosol cans and other solid wastes.

Walter Monroe Smith, Sr., 61, of Pineville is alleged to have hired Leroy Joseph Taylor, 52, of Deville, to conduct a cleanup of some property owned by Smith. On or about Sept. 27, 2010, Smith allegedly instructed Taylor to set fire to roofing shingles, tire rims, plastics products, and other solid wastes at the property. Smith is the owner of Rapides Roofing & Home Repair.

Smith's arrest was executed in connection with an arrest warrant issued on Jan. 19, 2011, by the Honorable George C. Metoyer, 9th Judicial District Court Judge. An arrest warrant has also been issued for Leroy Joseph Taylor regarding this incident.

Previously DEQ-CID investigated a similar incident involving Smith in February 2009. It is alleged Smith instructed his employees to set fire to piles of shingles on his property in located in Deville. Smith was charged by the Rapides District Attorney's Office for this incident in September 2009 and currently awaits trial in the 9th Judicial District. Smith is set to appear in court for the February 2009 incident on Jan. 25, 2011.

The violations cited in Smith's arrest warrant are felonies. If convicted of the crime of knowingly disposing of or emitting pollutants which could endanger human life or health, Smith faces possible imprisonment for not more than 10 years with or without hard labor, or a fine of not more than \$100,000, or both.

The mission of the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality is to protect the environment and public health. Any persons with knowledge of any spills, releases, odors, fish kills, open burning, waste tires and any other types of environmental incidents may contact the department at 225-219-3640 or Toll Free 1-888-763-5424.

An arrest does not constitute guilt in a criminal case and all subjects are presumed innocent. All evidence compiled during the investigation is presented to the area prosecutors who determine if formal charges are warranted.

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